



# Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

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## The American Soldier: My Hero

SAMANTHA MORTON

Growing up you always think that your hero is some famous artist or actor. Everyone has a different definition of hero. Hero isn't just a name you call someone for letting you copy his or her homework.

Hero comes from deep down within your heart. A hero is someone who is loyal, honest, caring and willing to risk his life for others.

That is the definition of my brother, Sgt. Douglas Mark Morton of the 248<sup>th</sup> Engineering Unit out of Norwich, who is fighting with our Armed Forces in Iraq.

It all started in the year of 1998, his junior year of high school. We come from a family that has three children and really can't afford to send all of us to college without some financial help. So after thinking over the options, Doug sat down and talked to my parents about joining the army. He not only wanted to join because it paid for his college education, but it also would be a great opportunity.

So the next thing we know he is an E1 soldier heading down to Fort Jackson for his basic training. It was in the summer of my eighth grade year; he left on July 1, 1999, and didn't come back until Nov. 11, 1999. When he left for basic I thought that was bad, I cried and just wanted him home safely. I can still remember the poem I wrote for him in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The American Soldier  
Samantha Morton

My brother left on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July  
He left me with a tear in my eye  
I still remember the clothes that he wore  
I waved goodbye as he walked through  
the door

He comes back November 11  
Trust me that day I'll be in heaven!

Every time my brother called on the phone I would talk to him. He was having a great time, meeting new people, getting in shape,

and mouthing off doing tons of push-ups. Then he would have to go because there was a line of soldiers behind him waiting to use the phone. He would say his farewell and so would I, and then I would hear a



Samantha Morton and her hero: her brother, Sgt. Douglas Morton of the 248<sup>th</sup> Eng. Company. (Morton Family photo)

click and tears would rush into my eyes and I would cry.

Then came the day when it was Nov. 11, 1999; that day in school seemed to go by so slow, never ending. His flight didn't come into Bradley airport until around 7:30 p.m. that night. My Mom, Dad, brother and myself all sat waiting for his arrival. The plane landed and we watched one by one as other people got off the plane. Finally a man dressed in his class A's got off the plane onto the extension and walked into the airport. Tears came to my eyes once again as I welcomed my brother home. He left on July 1 a young boy fresh out of high school, ready to party hard at college, and came home on Nov. 11 a man waiting to take the world on.

After finishing basic training he had to take a year off from school. In the school year of 2000 he was a freshman at Eastern Connecticut State University. He always thought that college would be a breeze. His freshman year went by fine loving every moment of college life, acting like a kid but being treated with the respect of an adult. Sophomore year was just getting under way when on Sept. 11, 2001, the United States was put in awe and shock as the Twin

Towers, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania were hit with U.S. planes filled with passengers.

That day will always be frozen in history. I was sitting in E period English when I heard the horrific news about what had happened; I had so many emotions running through my head. How could this have happened, how many died, what will we do, how is this going to affect my family with my brother in the Army?

On the news I heard about more and more army units getting called out on duty. I kept thinking to myself my brother is going to leave again out of the safety of his home into harm's way.

In the winter of 2001-2002 the United States hosted the Winter Olympics. Afraid of another terrorist attack, we then sent more Soldiers to protect the Olympics; my brother was called to duty. He was gone for a good two months, but I had a feeling he would be home safely.

My brother came home from the Winter Olympics with a smile on his face, meeting tons of famous people and having plenty of goodies to share with us. While he was at the Winter Olympics he once again was called out of school, and then again taking another semester off.

Doug had no issues about missing school to get an awesome opportunity to travel and see new things. The hard work of the Army protecting the United States from another terrorist attack wasn't an easy task. The United States wasn't just going to sit around and not do anything about what happened on Sept. 11, 2001.

President Bush declared war on Iraq. On Feb. 24, 2003, my brother's unit got activated and soon after they were sent up to Fort Drum in New York. At Fort Drum they went through some intense training to get ready for what was in store for them in the future. After six weeks of training the 248<sup>th</sup> Engineering Unit was sent over to Kuwait. They went straight into Iraq and have been there ever since.

See AMERICAN SOLDIER Page 31

## SRIP for deploying Soldiers clarified

Reference: CTDP-IM Policy Number 04-01 dated 1 October 2003 & DOD Financial Management Regulation Volume 7A Chapter 44 (Table 44-1) (Rule 7) Taxability of Items of Military Pay and Allowances.

Soldiers' benefits under the Selected Reserve Incentive Program, which include the Affiliation Bonus, Enlistment Bonus, Re-enlistment Bonus, Civilian Acquired Skills Program and Student Loan Repayment Program will not be cancelled or altered because of participation under the authority of Partial Mobilization.

Soldiers, who volunteer under Title 10, Section 12301(d) and are serving on contingency operations Temporary Tour Active Duty (COTTAD) orders in support of a named contingency operation where Partial Mobilization has been declared.

Soldiers deployed to a Combat Zone (CZ) or Qualified Hazardous Duty Area (QHDA), who is otherwise eligible to extend for an incentive, will receive a tax-free re-enlistment/extensions bonus. The tax-free incentive is only applicable if the extension of enlistment is done while serving OCONUS in the CZ or QHDA.

Stop Loss does not prevent a soldier from extending within the 90-day window of his or her normal ETS.

A soldier, who is a non-deployable asset, may be transferred to another MTOE unit or a derivative UIC for the duration of the mobilization and retain bonus eligibility based on the following criteria:

(1) The soldier will be transferred back to the original unit within 180 days of the unit's return from deployment.

(2) The soldier must be returned to the MOS for which the bonus was awarded and be the primary holder of the position. The soldier cannot be carried as excess.

A soldier who volunteers for deployment with the Army National Guard will retain incentive eligibility based on the following criteria:

(1) The soldier will be transferred back to the original unit within 180 days of the unit's return from deployment.

(2) The soldier must be returned to the MOS for which the bonus was awarded and be the primary holder of the position. The soldier cannot be carried as excess.

Point of Contact: Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Debbie Wilson, Incentive Manager (860-524-4809).

## New awards on tap for military spouses

BONNIE POWELL

Know a military spouse who exemplifies support to the community, volunteerism, selflessness or strength? A new military spouse award is now open for nominations and time is of the essence. Nominations are due by Nov. 9 for four new awards honoring active duty, retiree, Guard or Reserve, and veteran spouses. The active duty category includes Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine and Coast Guard spouses.

Nominations can be made online through a front page link at the Web site of the Defense Commissary Agency at [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com), at [www.militaryshoppers.com](http://www.militaryshoppers.com), or [www.avashow.com](http://www.avashow.com). Nomination forms will also be available Nov. 1 on Procter & Gamble product displays in commissaries, or the form can be downloaded now at [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com). The nomination process includes a requirement for a 500-word essay addressing one or more of the award criteria.

It's no coincidence that nominations are due just in time for Veterans Day. The inaugural American Military Spouse awards are part of the ninth annual American Veteran Awards, to be broadcast on The History Channel in February 2004 and also on American Forces Network at a later date. The spouse award recipients will attend the awards ceremony and taping in California, Nov. 20-23. The actual awards ceremony is Nov. 21.

The awards ceremony also includes "veteran" entertainers who support America's military personnel. Past ceremonies have included such stars as Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson, Dennis Franz, Chuck Norris and Dan Rather as recipients and presenters.

The new military spouse awards are being sponsored through a Veterans Day commissary promotion. "Procter & Gamble has tremendous respect for the men and women serving the U.S. Armed Forces," said Paula Parsons, marketing manager for P&G Military Markets. "We recognize the enormous sacrifices they make during lengthy deployments. They have faced these tasks with courage, discipline, leadership and dignity. But we also recognize the hardships their families endure during these difficult periods; they, too, deserve respect and admiration."

"For this reason, P&G Military Markets has chosen to join the American Veteran Awards by sponsoring the American Military Spouse Award, honoring those spouses who have demonstrated exceptional volunteer accomplishments; exuded ongoing strength during lengthy deployments, family separations and frequent moves; or fortitude in supporting other military families and their community," said Parsons.

For more information about the American Veteran Awards, go to [www.avashow.com](http://www.avashow.com).



## Website helps with school, deployment issues

GERRY J. GILMORE  
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

A Website created to help servicemembers, spouses and children navigate the challenges associated with military moves and deployments is now available.

Sponsored by the Defense Department, the site offers advice and resource assistance for school transition issues, military deployments and more, said John Molino deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy. DOD officials have long recognized the need to disseminate helpful information to the field "for students who transition between schools as their (military) parents are reassigned," Molino said. For years department officials have tried to provide as good information as is available to facilitate that transition, he said.

The emergence of the World Wide Web "has been an excellent opportunity for us to take advantage of that technology, provide that information and grow from there," Molino said.

The site contains school transition and deployment information targeted to the concerns of military parents, children 6 to 12 years old, teenagers, families with special-needs children, military leaders and educators, Molino said.

Parents can also access education-related information on transferring student records, graduation requirements and more.

The site allows military children and teens to access tips and information to help them cope with family moves and military-parent deployments, adapting to new schools and making new friends.

Monitored children's and teen's "chat rooms" also are available on the site. "The chat rooms will enhance the ability of children to share their own experiences, which will be most relevant in that age group," Molino said.

The war on terrorism has brought the issue of deployments to the front burner for military families, he said.

"In an age of increased deployments, it is more important to have this information on the Web site," Molino said. The war has made school districts more aware of the concerns of military families.

The site's overall purpose is to help servicemembers' children succeed within the framework of the military lifestyle, Molino said.

"These are not insurmountable problems," he said. "These are challenges, much like the challenges they will face for the rest of their lives."

People can visit the new site at [www.militarystudent.org](http://www.militarystudent.org).

## Handyperson Hotline for families and volunteers

Calling all soldiers and airmen, retirees or spouses. This is your opportunity to stop being a spectator and start doing something to help the Connecticut Army and Air National Guard during these unprecedented times.

Volunteer to donate some of your time and expertise to the CTNG Family Program's Handyperson Center. If you are a tradesman or an all around handyperson or a laborer, the Handyperson Center is looking for you!

E-mail your name, phone number skill, status (active, retired, spouse) and hometown to Sgt. Maj. Toby Cormier at [toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil) or call (860) 209-0770.

The Handyperson Hotline is designed to reduce the stressors on the families of deployed soldiers and airmen by having everyday household problems diagnosed and repaired or referred to competent businesses at no cost for labor.

The program is also designed to get seasonal chores such as window air conditioners installed/removed, pools

opened/closed, leaves removed, items brought to the dump and so on.

All of this can be performed by fellow Guardsmen, retirees or spouses of Guardsmen who are willing to donate their time and expertise to this program.

Here's how the program works:

A deployed family member calls the Handyperson Hotline with a clogged drain.

The Hotline manager contacts a plumber from the Handyperson Database who will contact the family member and attempt to walk the person through correcting the problem (if possible.)

If not corrected, the Hotline will dispatch a qualified person (fellow Guardsman) to the house to correct the problem.

It is designed to give the deployed family somewhere to turn to keep the home operating smoothly without having to pay to get things done around the house that were normally done by the deployed soldier or airman.

To volunteer or for more information, call (860) 209-0770 today.

## Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families

### The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian.

We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones.

We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to [ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil)

### HANDYPERSON HOTLINE

"CARRYING THE HOMEFRONT"

SERGEANT MAJOR  
TOBY P. CORMIER

Ph: 860-441-2984  
Cell: 860-209-0770  
[toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil](mailto:toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil)

# Family Support Program volunteers meet for Tri-State Workshop

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON  
103<sup>rd</sup> FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF WRITER

With nearly 1,200 Connecticut National Guardsmen currently on active duty, there was not a better time for the Tri-State National Guard Family Support Program Volunteer Workshop, which Connecticut hosted at the Mystic Hilton Sept. 12 through 14.

At the three-day event, Family Support Program volunteers listened to guest speakers and attended seminars about military family issues, as well as shared with each other ideas and information. Volunteers from the Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island National Guards participated in the workshop.

Most important was "everybody getting together and sharing how they feel, their experiences and what is happening at their home, especially under the circumstances

where there's been so many injuries and deaths," said Donna Rivera, Connecticut Air National Guard Family Support Program Coordinator.

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, addressed the group Saturday morning during the opening ceremony. He emphasized the importance and seriousness of the role Guard men and women are playing at home and worldwide.

"The United States is at war. This is a uniformed service. We're at war with terrorists without a face... The front today happens to be Afghanistan and Iraq in Southwest Asia where we deploy our Guardsmen and women to fight in harm's way protecting America against this terrorist threat. That is a very big responsibility," he said.

Cugno said the biggest concern facing families was the uncertainty of when their loved ones would be home. He explained the answer was based on the president's requirements.

"Bear with us. The rules are the president of the United States has the authority to activate reserve component personnel for a year and extend it to two," he said.



Family support members discuss ideas during the opening ceremony of the Tri-State National Guard Family Support Program Volunteer Workshop at the Mystic Hilton Sep. 13. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aseltion, 103<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

The general recently visited Connecticut troops serving in Kuwait and said he did not find one person who did not want to be there or wanted to quit.

"I think it's a tribute to the dedication and why they joined," he said.

Pat Shannon, from East Granby, attended the workshop with her husband, Dave. They are both Family Support Program volunteers for the Connecticut Air National Guard. Though the couple does not have a loved one in the unit, they are a military family with their two sons currently serving in Army units based outside Connecticut. Shannon said she needs all the basic information and needs to know what to do.

The workshop "is the perfect opportunity to network and talk with other families," Shannon said. "Talking with other people

who are really into this gives ideas and thoughts about how we can help."

Kim Hoffman, the state Family Program Coordinator, said that the three states attending the workshop are unique in that none has an active duty Army or Air Force installation that provides support services.

"I hope the volunteers and all the attendees learn some valuable things to take back to their family readiness groups to share with other families, help prepare families that haven't deployed yet, and continue to support the families that have been," she said.

The workshop offered its participants a variety of seminars given by different guest speakers, including military representatives, social workers, and authors who have written books on related topics. Seminars included "Coping with Deployment," "Helping Children Cope with War," and "Preparing for Reunion."

At the awards banquet Saturday night retired Chief Timothy Seitz and his family received the Connecticut Air National Guard Family Support Program's Family of the Year Award. The Laibrandt-Sommes family received the same award for the state's Army National Guard.

Though the schedule was short Sunday, the many Connecticut volunteers left early to head back to the Air National Guard base in East Granby for the 103<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing's Family Day. There the volunteers helped with all aspects of event as changes were made due to rain.

The Connecticut National Guard Family Program mission statement in part reads that it "serves as the primary source for programs which enhance the readiness of service members and their families."

## Connecticut National Guard Family Program recognized for contributions

MAJ. JOHN R. WHITFORD  
STATE PAO

The Connecticut Family Day Committee has recognized the Connecticut National Guard Family Program for the organization's contributions to families at the Sixth-Annual Connecticut Family Day Kick-Off event at the Legislative Office Building.

This event recognizes families as Connecticut's greatest resource, and that all sectors of Connecticut's society have the privilege and obligation to honor them.

This year's theme is "Share Your Family With Your Community...Valuing Connecticut's Families...It's Everybody's Business."

The theme of volunteering is especially important this year, since many Connecticut families have members deployed as uniformed service personnel.

Senator Joseph Crisco, Department of Children and Families Commissioner Darlene Dunbar and Department of Education Commissioner Theodore Sergi and members of the Family Day Committee recognized organizations that support families of servicemen and women from the Air Force and the Navy.



Ms. Kim Hoffman and Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno (l) are presented with the Connecticut Family Day award by State Sen. Joseph Crisco (c) at the Connecticut Family Day kick-off event. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State Public Affairs Officer)

## American Soldier

From Page 29

I talked to my brother on the day after my junior prom, a day that happens once in your life and you want your loved ones to experience it with you. But for me that didn't happen, instead I got a phone call the next day on May 18, 2003, to see how my night went.

The whole summer went by without me speaking to my brother, not because neither one of us wanted to speak to the other but because our schedules weren't compatible. This past year I started my senior year of

high school. I didn't know what to expect, usually getting all the insight from my brother beforehand; not this year. I went in cold turkey.

I heard from my brother for the first time in the middle of September right between our birthdays since the last time we talked after prom.

He told me nights were hot and days were even hotter. Food was food if that's what you call M-R-E's, protecting our country everyday while waiting for his unit to be called back home. In our short conversation

in mid-September he told me that his arrival date home would be May 15, 2004, but it changes all the time.

I pray for his safety everyday while he is away, waiting for the day that he arrives home safely.

That is why my brother to me is my hero. He puts others' well-being before his own. He is protecting the lives of the citizens of the United States lives, while putting his own in danger, and stopping his education of a hat for the United States Army. I love my brother and he is my hero.

American Soldier 2  
Samantha Morton

He is my brother the hero I look up to  
He who helps me get through life's lessons

He who is willing to risk his life for me  
He who is overseas enduring freedom in Iraq

He who I want to come home safely, my Brother, my Hero!



## Family Assistance Center locations

Family Assistance Centers are set-up in the following armories around the state:

Bristol Armory  
61 Center Street, Bristol, CT 06010  
(860) 582-1206 Toll Free 866-347-2283 1st Lt. Lynda Hedenberg

Waterbury Armory  
64 Field Street, Waterbury, CT 06702  
(203) 574-2406 Toll Free 866-347-2291 Sgt. Jonathon Duffy

Manchester Armory  
330 Main Street, Manchester, CT 06040  
(860) 646-0780 Toll Free 866-347-2286 Capt. Lauri Tinelle

Windsor Locks, AASF  
Bradley International ARPT-BLDG 85-152, Route 75, Windsor Locks, CT 06096  
(860) 627-7942 Toll Free 866-347-2292

Groton - AVCRAD  
71 Tower Avenue, Groton, CT 06340  
(860) 448-3346 Toll Free 866-347-3346 Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Ives

103rd FW, Bradley ANG Base  
Bldg 8, East Granby, CT 06026  
(860) 292-2730 Mrs. Donna Rivera

Newington SASC  
555 Willard Avenue, Building 2W, Newington, CT 06111  
(860) 878-6723 (860) 878-6724 Toll Free 800-858-2677  
Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Spec. Jessica McKenna and Staff Sgt. Christopher McCarty

Branford Armory  
87 Montowese Street, Branford, CT 06405  
(203) 481-3874 Toll Free 866-347-3351 Sgt. 1st Class Cheryl Gilbert

Stratford Armory  
63 Armory Road, Stratford, CT 06614  
(203) 375-8269 Toll Free 866-347-3356 Spec. Tamara Jex

Middletown Armory  
200 Main Street, Middletown, CT 06457  
(860) 344-9201 Toll Free 866-347-3355 Ms. Michelle McIntosh

Norwich Armory  
38 Stott Avenue, Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 887-3911 Toll Free 866-347-3357

103rd Air Control Squadron  
206 Boston Post Road, orange, CT 06477  
(203) 795-2983 Charlie and Jane Solomon

Volunteers are needed in each facility.  
Those wishing to help out can contact Mrs. Kim Hoffman, Family Program Manager at 1-800-858-2677.

Any family member or loved one of a deployed soldier who has questions about benefits or deployment issues may also get answers to their question at the following email addresses: kim.hoffman@ct.ngb.army.mil or julian.muller@ct.ngb.army.mil

### School

S P E L L I N G M Y G A G C P  
N E L F X S T U D E N T A F I  
Z O I S K O O B K C I R J I F  
G Q T D C F W J C U T T H S A  
J S E E U I R E A D I N G U Q  
S E R B B T E Y P C R J N C Y  
H E A R T O S N K H W Q S I O  
L Z T E D I O L C S T Y F S F  
Z E U P V F P K A E E A L U Q  
Q C R A Y O N S B I A I M M M  
G I E P W A L O O H C S E L L  
F I U U L G K M D N H O B W R  
E P H Y G C B R E C E S S V O  
Q R Y M C Q C P J Z R U D A O

## Kids' Creative Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE  
OF FUN AND  
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art	Backpack	Books	Crayons
Gym	Literature	Math	Music
Notebook	Paper	Pencil	Reading
Recess	School	Science	Social
Studies	Spelling	Student	Teacher
Writing			